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CAMILLO

SIVORI

A SKETCH

OF HIS LIFE, TALENT, TRAVELS

AND SUCCESSES,

BY E. JAMES,

PH. & LIT. D.

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1845

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SIVORI.

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In literature, arts and sciences (one might even say in any line), whenever an extraordinary man makes his appearance, who not only excels, but leaves immeasurably behind him all those who are pursuing the same career; — a man who seems almost to have created his art (although he is often merely a brilliant continuer of some obscure initiator); — a man who conquers public favour to such a degree, that all applause seems reserved for him alone; — who takes possession of all the trumpets of Fame, so that they no longer resound except to celebrate his triumphs; — who so completely absorbs all the rays of Glory, that that star, so variable and so envied, shines for his exclusive benefit; — when, I say, such a man presents himself, what takes place in the world? Always the same thing. On one side Enthusiasm, and on the other Envy, immediately set to work; — the former to ascertain by what miracle

of Heaven the great man has risen to his bright eminence; the latter to discover whether there is not at the bottom of his triumph some good satanic compact, duly signed and sealed with the great seal of Lucifer's kingdom : the one looks for a god, the other for a demon; — in a word, be it for good or for evil, some miraculous legend is sure to interfere.

And, leaving aside a host of names that present themselves to my memory, to cast my eye towards a single province of the empire of Art, and on one corner of that province, was not this the fate of the most wonderful violinist of modern times? Of him whom one might truly call the Alexander, the Cæsar, the Napoleon of violinists, had not all those appellations been stupidly lavished by the press? In a word, was not this the fate of Niccolò Paganini? Yes, certainly; and Envy, malignant, baleful-eyed Envy, after exhausting all the resources of her trade, raked up I know not what fantastical (or rather fanatical) tale, about a murdered mistress, a dark dungeon, a violin with a single string... perhaps without any string at all, to make the infernal prodigy complete. But whilst Envy was relating this atrocious nonsense, Enthusiasm was not idle. In fact (like all other children, who know and esteem the present only) was it not forgetting the glorious phalanx of Italian violinists, whose rarest qualities Paganini had united in himself, it is true, but of whom in reality he was merely the fortunate

continuer? and was it not proclaiming him the creator of a new style, unknown before him, and which no one was to inherit after his death? Well! If the first part of this proposition was incorrect, the second was to prove equally false. Paganini has an heir, and but one; and so much the better; for property too much divided is often squandered without fruit, and almost always dwindles to nothing.

But here an observation full of interest presents itself. Locatelli, Tartini, Nardini, Lolli, Pugnani, Campagnoli, Viotti, etc., are certainly great names, and it was a hard task to struggle against them; it appeared impossible to drive them completely into oblivion. However, as each of those eminent artists excelled particularly in one or the other special quality, no sooner was it proved (or at least believed) that Paganini united in himself alone to the highest possible degree the prodigious dexterity of the one, the admirable pureness of sound of the other, the fantastic or passionate play of a third, etc., than the new sun eclipsed all the brilliant stars that had preceded it; Paganini was proclaimed King of the violin, and his exclusive empire was recognized and obeyed by all...

But to succeed such a colossus! to appear after him, and to perform with success the very pieces that he himself performed! with success, did I say? — To assume his manner to such a degree, that those who

had heard the illustrious Genoese believed in a metempsychosis! to meet with admirers of the latter who, in many respects, preferred the legatee to the testator!... was, if I am not mistaken, a still greater miracle than the former. — The man who has accomplished this miracle is named Camillo Sivori.

If any one had taken it into his head to say so five years ago (it is five years since Paganini breathed his last at Nice), no doubt he would have been prodigiously laughed at for his pains. And why so? — Because at that time the heir had not yet collected all the titles he had to bring forward, nor thoroughly established his claims to the inheritance. Now he has collected the former... the newspapers of the whole of Europe, that proclaim him the only man worthy and capable of playing Paganini's compositions, and of performing them with all the vigour, the *brio,* the fancy, the passion, the satanic spirit, in a word, the poetry by which they are distinguished. The latter... are as numerous as his concerts, which, in the short space of five years, already amount to the fabulous figure of *nine hundred* and upwards; concerts every one of which was a triumph for the artist.

Such is the extraordinary performer whose life I intended to relate in a substantial biographical sketch, entirely destitute of fable; when I heard that a London paper, "*The Musical World,*" had just published one which had met with general approbation, and

the best of all approbations, that of the artist himself, who had recognized himself therein faithfully depicted. I therefore procured it, and after reading it, I perceived, to my great satisfaction, that it was just such a one as I should have wished mine to have been : short and true. Moreover, I can affirm that it is the most correct and most carefully written sketch that has been hitherto published; not having had to rectify a single fact, but merely to add here and there a few developments or slight circumstances, that no one could have been acquainted with, unless intimate with Sivori and his family. This advantage I did not possess myself; but I had the good fortune of being able to derive my information from a friend on whose veracity I could place the fullest reliance. Add to this that I have interspersed the narrative with extracts from English, French, Belgian, Dutch, German, Russian, etc., papers, and a correct idea will be formed of the very few alterations I have made in the biographer's production.

E. James,
Phil. & Lit. D.

CAMILLO SIVORI

A SKETCH

OF HIS LIFE, TALENT, TRAVELS

AND SUCCESSES.

The sketch of the life of this great artist, which we have gleaned from the most authentic sources, will, we have no doubt, be highly acceptable to all our readers. The parents of Camillo Sivori are distinguished citizens of Genoa. His father, a merchant of competent circumstances, would never have induced, nor permitted his son to have undertaken the profession he now adorns, had he not observed in him, from his very cradle, that extraordinary passion for music, which nothing but the instinctiveness of genius could have so prematurely foreshown, and to which no parent, save he were obstinately blind, could have offered hindrance and obstruc-

tion. The subject of our sketch was born at Genoa, the birthplace likewise of Paganini, on the 6th of June, 1817. We may mention as a remarkable circumstance, that on the evening of the night on which he was born, his mother, notwithstanding the delicacy of her situation, was induced to go to a concert given by Paganini at the Teatro Santo Agostino in Genoa; when the performance of the great maestro produced such an effect on her mind and nerves as to precipitate her accouchement, and the young Sivori came into the world somewhat before his time. His mother not being permitted by her medical attendant to bring up the child, Camillo was sent to a nurse about thirty miles from the city. Hardly had he reached the age of eighteen months, when he gave evidence almost miraculous of that innate mental direction that urged him on in his peculiar path to subsequent fame. We are positively assured, that without the possibility of his ever having heard or seen a violin player, the boy at this infant age continually amused himself by using two pieces of stick after the manner of the violin and the bow, humming at the same time whatever "glimpses of music" came into his head. Before he had reached the end of his second year, early one summer morning, some country people were passing by on their way to a *fête,* accompanied by three or four instrumental performers. The youthful Camillo no sooner heard the music than he rushed from the house and followed the cavalcade several miles to the end of their destination. As soon as the nurse missed him, she ran in a state of distraction over the village, seeking for him everywhere, and had given him up for lost, when,

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on the return of the country people towards evening, she discovered her young truant in the midst of the players, whom he had kept near all day, wound up to a pitch of ecstasy and wonder. With the greatest difficulty, and not without using force, he was induced to forego his new acquaintances, whom he left with tears and sobbings. At two years old he was taken home, and had hardly been reconciled to his change of abode, when he cried out lustily for a violin. His father told him repeatedly he should have one when he grew older, but the boy so tormented him that, to get rid of him, he at last purchased him a child's fiddle. He began at three years of age to apply himself, morning, noon, and night, to practising on this instrument, and, without any assistance or instruction, he was able in a short time to play many airs he had heard his elder sisters execute on the guitar. At four years of age he could perform every thing he heard his sisters play or sing. The report of this spread all over Genoa, and the boy was called *prodigioso*. He was invited everywhere. The highest nobility in the city had him at their soirées. He was entertained and sought for at the most *recherché* parties. Morning and evening private concerts were given to make the boy the special feature. When he played, they placed him on a table in the middle of the room. Even the King and Queen Dowager, when they heard such wonders of the child, invited him frequently to the palace, and showered gifts upon him. It would be impossible to name the quantity of presents he received at this time.

A circumstance equally extraordinary was that the

child would on no account enter a church or any other place of public resort, unless there was music; but if on passing before any such place he happened to hear the slightest sound, nothing could stop his going in; and, to prevent him from crying or screaming, his desire had to be gratified.

In his sixth year, a new phase took place in his fortunes. Paganini arrived at his native city. He heard on every side miraculous accounts of the young Sivori. The father was one of his friends. He wrote to him next day, requesting him to bring the child with him that he might hear him. When he heard him play, he advised the father to have the boy immediately instructed. The father was not very anxious his son should follow music as a profession, fearing lest it should be only time thrown away from some more certain and lucrative occupation. " Leave the child to my teaching for a short time, " said Paganini, " and I will truly tell you whether his time would or would not be thrown away in studying music and the violin. " In short, such advances did he make in his practice and studies under Paganini, that in two months he played a concerto in public, written expressly for him by his great master, together with six short sonatas. All these pieces, composed for him and written with Paganini's own hand, he has preserved with love and respect, and carries everywhere with him.

It is impossible to describe the trouble that Paganini took with the child, and the interest he felt for him. This was quite contrary to his usual manner; for he never consented to give a lesson to any one, even when offered the most considerable sums. He treated his

pupil with severity during the lesson, but was always affectionate and amiable when it was over. He often used to say : " Play that passage a thousand times, until it succeeds perfectly. " Then the child would burst into tears, and almost cry his eyes out; but on the other hand his lively and precocious intellect made him understand what an immense advantage he would derive from the great artist's instructions.

Six months afterwards Paganini departed for Germany; and such was his attachment to young Sivori that he requested of his father to be allowed to take him with him to continue to give him instruction, and make him play in public under his direction. But the father, who knew how capricious a character Paganini was, durst not to part with a child whom he idolized; and alleged as an excuse that his son was still so very young (he was only seven) that he was more in want of the care of his mother than capable of undertaking a long and fatiguing journey. Paganini then recommended the elder Sivori to place his son under Costa, who had instructed the great artist in his first studies. During three years the young Camillo underwent a severe course of tuition, being kept by Costa almost entirely to the music of Corelli, Tartini, Pugnani, Viotti, etc., and other classic masters of the old and good Italian school. When Paganini returned to Genoa, he was enchanted with the improvement he found in his little pupil. He again advised the father respecting his son, and told him it was now time the boy should divide his severe tasks, and study the taste and expression of violin playing as well as its force and grandeur. For this purpose Camillo was given another master be-

side Costa, and was placed with M. Dellepiane, an intimate friend of Paganini, and one whom as a teacher the great violinist respected and prized. Under these two artists, young Sivori made astonishing progress. He was at this period between ten and eleven years of age. His father was desirous he should now make a tour in France and England. He departed accordingly, in 1827, accompanied by his second master, M. Dellepiane. At Paris he played twice at the Conservatoire, where he obtained tremendous success.

Perhaps our readers will not be sorry to hear what was said of him at the time by the *Journal des Débats,* the very paper which, fifteen years afterwards, was to bestow such pompous praises on the fruits which that charming young flower was then only promising — and how well it kept its promise!

Amongst the numerous pleasures which have occupied the moments of the *dilettanti* of the metropolis, we must especially mention the concert given on the 10th at the rooms of the École Royale de Musique. The artists who performed were M^me^ Demeri, whose pure and harmonious voice was so much admired in Italy during her excursion in that country; M. Clementini, M. and M^me^ Pagliardini, who had not yet appeared in France, M^me^ Durand, and M. Dell' Oro were listened to with much interest; but all the honours of the entertainment were for the young Camillo Sivori, of Genoa. This extraordinary child, scarcely ten years of age, and whose charming countenance highly interested the brilliant company present at the concert, showed that he had no need of that advantage to captivate the favour of the audience. His skill on the violin announces a talent which one would imagine arrived at its maturity. He surmounts the greatest diffi-

culties with the perfect ease that distinguishes the great masters; notwithstanding the natural impediment necessarily presented by the smallness of his hands. But what particularly distinguishes him, is the soul that he puts in his execution — the first quality of an artist, and which neither study, time, nor counsels can give. It is this in particular that leads us to hope that Camillo Sivori will carry the art of the violin beyond the limits at present known, and that he will not confine himself to the talent as an instrumentist in which he already excels; we believe him to be reserved for a higher fate. He was received, encouraged and followed by the most unanimous and protracted applause, even when he left the stage. It was a highly interesting sight to behold the emotion that possessed the youthful artist; and the public felt it a duty, as well as a pleasure, to give him proofs of their extreme satisfaction.

(*Journal des Débats*, 24th February 1828.)

He played for the first time in London, for Madame Pasta's benefit, at Her Majesty's Theatre; and subsequently gave two concerts on his own account, as he had previously done in the French capital. Every night during his stay in London he was engaged at soirées, and frequently three times in a night. His reception everywhere was enthusiastic. From London he returned to Paris, where he remained nine months studying. From thence he proceeded to Havre, Rouen, Amiens, Abbeville, Lille, etc., and arrived at Genoa after an absence of eighteen months, giving concerts on his route homeward, and in every place creating a *furore*. He now applied himself closely to the study of counterpoint, under the celebrated Serra, an ingenious composer after

the manner of Mozart, though but little known as yet beyond his native walls of Genoa. The music and especially the quartetts of this master are worthy and will gain the meed of appreciation. His instructions in harmony (which he never granted to any one, but to Sivori only, out of friendship, and at the instigation of Paganini and of young Camillo's family) were rigorous and inflexible. Sivori studied under him for eight years. When Paganini returned from France and England, he was called upon frequently by the young artist, to hear him play and ask his advice; and although at this time the great violinist was grievously indisposed, he neither withheld his playing nor refused his assistance to his young friend. M. Dellepiane, who was first violin at the Theatre Carlo Felice at Genoa, and master of the Conservatoire of the same city, was taken ill; and Sivori, to preserve his post and his salary, replaced him at the theatre and Conservatoire, giving M. Dellepiane the entire benefit of his services. After two years Dellepiane died, and the young artist still held the two places for the use of his master's widow during the space of an entire year, until a situation was procured which enabled her to live without extraneous assistance. All comment upon such an act would be superfluous. Sivori, though still a mere youth, was retained in the directorship of the theatre as well as the Conservatoire. He remained here for a year and a half, well knowing that no situation could better befit him for becoming a good orchestral player, and developing his musical ideas. During the vacations he travelled into several of the Italian states, such as Milan, Turin, Leghorn, Florence, Nice, etc., etc.,

giving concerts at each place, and adding greatly to his fame. His success was indeed prodigious. Alexander Rolla, of Milan, the celebrated master of Paganini, used to call him "his dear child and his second little Paganini;" and made parties on purpose to have the young violinist brought into notice. Sivori was enrolled member of every Italian city in which he sojourned. During this period his performance was gradually progressing to that perfection of intonation, facility of execution, delicacy and purity of style, that has elevated him to his present pinnacle. His improvement was the theme of every tongue, when he was heard after an interval of time. And if we abstain from mentioning what was said of him by the Italian newspapers (of which we have an enormous quantity in our possession), it is lest they should be accused of national partiality. Extracts from the journals of other countries will suffice.

One thing only preyed upon the mind of the young maestro at this period of his glory and aggrandizement. The violin upon which he played, manufactured by Andrew Guarnerius, though the best he could procure in his multitudinous researches, did not reach his idea of a true instrument. Possessed of the most sensitive and refined ear, nothing short of perfectibility could satisfy his choice in a violin. Paganini, he knew, was possessor of several such as his heart could desire; but how to procure one of them was the difficulty. He spoke to his father and induced him by urgent entreaties to write to Paganini, offering him any sum he named for one of his best instruments. Paganini's answer was alike a proof of his own generosity, and of his high opinion

of the young artist. " I will not sell you the violin, but I will present it to you, in compliment to your high talents. " This is the same instrument upon which Sivori now plays in public. Sivori travelled to Nice on purpose to receive the violin from Paganini's own hands. This was in the year 1840. He found the great violinist in the most deplorable situation. He could hardly utter a word distinctly, and what he said could only be interpreted into meaning by his son. Notwithstanding the fearful state he was in, he signified a wish once more to hear his pupil play; and as the noise of the instrument would be too loud in the chamber of sickness, Sivori removed himself to an apartment at some distance and played whatever Paganini called for. At his return he complimented him in the highest terms, and though speaking incoherently, he uttered with emphasis the following sentence : " You will be the only survivor of my manner. Go to Paris — study there — there all great artists beget their reputations. — Go to Paris. After Paris you require no more. " After this he still continued offering him counsel and advice, until the son, fearing ill consequences from his father's excited state, wisely broke off the interview. In six days Sivori was obliged to depart. He felt he never again should see his first and greatest master and benefactor, and the thought pressed hard upon his heart, and made his journey homewards heavy and desolate. Too true; in about a fortnight after he reached Genoa he received a letter, which told him Paganini was dead. His last words clung to Sivori like a dying mandate, and he followed implicitly his counsels and his

suggestions. He resigned his direction of the Conservatoire, and projected the grand tour of the continent. Paris was the centre of his aim, but, as France was much disturbed about this time, he postponed his visit thereto till a fitter occasion, and set out for Milan, from whence he proceeded to Venice, Trieste, Vienna, Pesth, Dresden, Frankfort, etc., even to St. Petersburgh and Moscow, where he met with the most extraordinary success, adding largely to his purse, more especially in Berlin, Warsaw, Petersburgh, and Moscow. In each of these last cities he gave from four to six concerts.

FROM THE RUSSIAN PAPERS.

Sivori exhibits such grace and delicacy in his play, that we do not recollect ever having witnessed the like in the most celebrated violinists; none of them would be capable of *singing* an air as he does, with so much sweetness and feeling. We hardly know to which of his qualities to assign the palm. In the *Prayer of Moses,* he displayed such a degree of pathos and energy, that he equalled the ravishing sounds of Paganini, and excited the enthusiasm of the whole audience... But it was in the *Carnival of Venice* that he unquestionably proved that he had penetrated the fantastic play of the great master. His prodigious execution called forth the most unceasing and unbounded applause. (*Petersburgh Gazette.*)

Instead of calling Sivori *Paganini's pupil,* we ought to call him *Paganini the younger.* To express our opinion in a few words : *every difficulty presented by the violin has been overcome*

by him, and to perfection. All that is delightful, sweet, brilliant and amazing in that instrument, has been attained by Sivori in the highest degree. The talent with which this young artist makes use of the fourth string is so admirable, that his all powerful bow could do without the three others. In short, Sivori is in the strictest sense of the word, the only pupil of Paganini; or rather, he is the only performer capable of replacing that giant of the musical world.

(*Moscow Gazette.*)

The artist who has borne off the palm of superiority, and whose concerts have eclipsed every other, is the heir to Paganini's genius, and his only pupil, Camillo Sivori. The house actually shook with the applause bestowed on his performance; and his concert was an uninterrupted triumph. Sivori announced his concert for the 23d of April; and on the 20th already there was not a box or a seat to be had. On the day of the concert there was not a box that did not contain six or eight persons, etc.

(*Moscow Gazette.*)

FROM THE GERMAN PAPERS.

A truly prodigious phenomenon appeared a few days ago in the person of Camillo Sivori, the only pupil of Paganini. He surprised and startled every connoisseur. We do not exaggerate when we say that Sivori surpasses all the violinists of the modern school. (*Frankfort Journal,* 28th July 1842.)

To Sivori really belongs the title of pupil of Paganini : we might even say that Sivori surpasses him in many things, such

as the prodigious audacity and distinction with which he overcomes the most perilous passages : but Sivori goes still further : he makes these wonderful feats appear nothing at all, such is the facility with which he performs them. In a word : Sivori's play is as much above the usual manner of playing the violin, as heaven is above earth.

(*Frankfort Conversation Paper,* 29th July 1842.)

Camillo Sivori, the worthy successor of Paganini, deserves to be placed in the first rank of violinists; for he unites, to the highest degree of *bravura* and technical dexterity, a play full of taste and rich with expression, which surmounts every difficulty with the most amazing calm and assurance. He reminds us of his master. The public bestowed on him such enthusiastic plaudits as are only showered on the most extraordinary performers... As this artist intends to continue his travels in distant lands, we consider it our duty to announce to the public of foreign countries the appearance of so transcendant a talent, etc. (From the Frankfort paper, *Didaskalia,* of 24th Aug. 1842.)

Several distinguished artists had chosen Paganini for their model, and endeavoured more or less to approach his manner. We have three remarkable instances in Lipinski, in our celebrated Ernst, and in Ole Bull. But we always returned to the conviction that Paganini's style could not be selected as a model to be imitated, either partially or entirely; because his technical preparation was completely different from the one usually adopted. Camillo Sivori, who from the beginning has always followed the Paganinian method, who has had the good fortune to receive

that great master's instructions, and who has inherited his instrument, is the only one who can really call himself his pupil; he alone has succeeded in vanquishing the gigantic difficulties of Paganini's marvellous compositions.

(*The Eagle,* Vienna paper.)

... Sivori calls himself Paganini's pupil — an incontestable title if one compares the resemblance his style presents with that of the great master. This young man, who might be called a phenomenon, has the whole art of playing the violin at his fingers' ends, as we say; and in this respect he surpasses De Bériot, Ernst, and even Ole Bull, etc.

(From *The Traveller,* Vienna paper.)

SIVORI AT WIESBADEN.

In the perfection of his play, in his triumph over the most arduous difficulties of the instrument, Sivori may have taken the great, and in his line, the unique *maestro* Paganini for his model; but, after hearing so many pretended pupils of that sublime artist, we consider it a trait of modesty on the part of Sivori, and one that does him great credit, to have announced himself simply as Paganini's pupil. Hitherto we had heard mere imitators of the mighty artist, mere musical mountebanks who copied with a demoniacal exaggeration his mode of expression and struggle with difficulties; who contented themselves with mastering to a certain degree the handling of the instrument, without exhibiting a single spark of feeling : — so much for the pretended pupils of Paganini. Sivori is not one of these : he possesses the true poetic nature of the artist; he is solid and

consummate in his art, and needs not be propped up by the edifice of glory raised by the hero of the violin. He is indeed an extraordinary performer; he will create as much delight in Paris, London or Moscow as among the Hottentots. He will produce enthusiasm in a place where music has been carried to perfection as well as in one where it is still in its infancy. I will compare him to no other artist; but wherever he appears with his instrument he will gloriously beat Ole Bull. This artist, who has hitherto been trumpetting himself forth as the first violin player next to Paganini, may yet learn a great deal from young Sivori. I heard Paganini : that magician, by his desperate and horribly beautiful play, hurled my soul to the bottom of Dante's *Inferno*. Sivori has as much force of expression; but his colouring is more delicate, and his play has something heavenly... Till now it was supposed that De Bériot, Ole Bull and Ernst were the only artists who could pretend to an honourable place by the side of the mighty Paganini. Well, Sivori surpasses Ole Bull in grandeur and energy of sound, and the renowned Ernst in his terrific boldness of *bravura*. Camillo Sivori is one of the most wonderful apparitions in the musical world, etc. (Mayence Paper, *The Cursaal.*)

The courts of Vienna and Petersburgh engaged him at their concerts, and loaded him with magnificent presents. The like testimonials he also received from the princes, marshals, ministers, and nobility of St. Petersburgh and Moscow, at whose houses he had the honour of performing. After travelling eighteen months, returning by Hamburgh at the period of the great conflagration of that city, Sivori expressed himself ready to give a concert

for the benefit of the sufferers : but the gloom that overspread the whole community was unfavourable to such an entertainment, and it was abandoned. But in other cities through which he travelled, his services were made available, and in several instances he left blessings behind him for the poor. At last he arrived at his native city, Genoa, loaded with gifts, honours, and glory. Here he gave three concerts only, although more were demanded, one for himself, and two for the poor of his native town. After three months repose he set out for Marseilles, Lyons, and Paris. In the French capital he first played at the Conservatoire. Some days after his performance, a medal was sent to him, with the following inscription : — " The Royal Academy of Music. The Committee to Camillo Sivori. " The medal was accompanied with two letters, in the highest degree flattering to the artist. He gave four very profitable concerts at the " Italiens. " In private circles he received higher terms than were ever paid before to any other artist; and that, to hear him repeat the numerous compositions of Paganini, which he alone is capable of performing with the spirit, feeling and precision of his master. We say *he alone,* and with good reason; for all the violinists who have ventured on that perilous undertaking have completely, and we might almost say, ridiculously failed.

A complete triumph was obtained by M. Sivori, Paganini's first pupil, and his magical violin, which his master left him. This is not a fantastic tale, and what is still less so, is M. Sivori's prodigious talent; you must hear him play the *Carnival of Venice* to understand, if you have not heard Paganini, all the

caprice and wit that there is in the violin ; then only it really becomes, as they say, the king of instruments.

(*Siècle,* 6 Febr. 1843.) H. L.

Two new artists are contending for the opinion of the musical world. It is but a fortnight since a young pianist, M. Dreyschock, presented himself as a candidate for the renown of Liszt; and the applause of the public proved that he had not been mistaken in his hopes. What prevented M. Dreyschock becoming the lion of the season? No one foresaw the arrival of Sivori, and every body is aware that in such cases divided attention is always fatal. Scarce had M. Dreyschock's celebrity emerged from Erard's rooms, than M. Sivori soared higher. He knocked at the door of the Conservatoire, and showed Paganini's violin, the violin which his master had left him as to the most worthy. Open your gates, make room for the relics of the prince of violinists! M. Sivori played. Paganini's instrument has not been disgraced in his hands. It quivered beneath his bow, as in the days of the illustrious artist. It did not feel astonished at the correctness of its intonation : its deceased owner had instructed it too well. It knew the Conservatoire again; it recognized the orchestra and the public; and all the wonders of Paganini's art, the suavity of his harmonic notes, the strain on the double string with its accompaniment in *tremolo legato* were all revived at the same moment. The public bestowed three rounds of applause. For the first time, perhaps, a solo was near being encored at the Conservatoire; although this solo had been preceded by an exquisite symphony, Haydn's 53d, and a *mottetto* of Cherubini, etc.

(*Messager.*) Ed. Thierry.

Two days afterwards, the lovers of music were in presence of another artist, who, from the moment of his first appearance at the Conservatoire, had been proclaimed at once the possessor of the sceptre of the violin. When an instrument is represented in so striking and admirable a manner by the French and Belgian schools, by Mess^rs^ De Bériot, Hauman, Alard, Artot, Vieuxtemps, Dancla, and many other artists of unquestionable merit, it is no small thing for a new performer, to be allowed to hold even an ordinary rank amidst so brilliant a galaxy of talent.

It is, therefore, from a full and entire conviction that we unhesitatingly place Sivori above all the celebrated performers whose names we have just mentioned. And we now feel the more secure in so doing, because in his last concert, this extraordinary artist displayed no longer a brilliant and curious eccentricity, but the happiest and most wonderful union of the essential qualities both of a great musician and of a violinist of the classical school.

The whole of the first portion of his introductory piece is of the most classical character, to such a degree that Sivori's performance may be said to belong to Viotti's school, improved, it is true, and carried to a degree of perfection which that master himself could never have expected. In Mayseder's trio, the young Genoese artist, tried by the test of the severest rules, is not liable to the slightest observation. Even the brazen effect produced by placing the bow on the bridge of the violin, which good taste would have wished to have had suppressed in this trio, is in reality justified by this indication of the music, " *sul ponticello.* " In the *Prayer of Moses,* where is the violinist who would dare to enter the lists with Sivori in point of grandeur, majesty, ampleness of the bow and expression? Would it be just to undervalue those qualities which alone would be sufficient to constitute his incontestable superiority, because, in imitation

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of Paganini, he has discovered in the purest and most delicate application of harmonic sounds, in the most rapid and unforeseen attack of the *pizzicati,* and in the combination of these two resources, new effects, of amazing sonority, full of variety, richness, fancy, in pieces of a light and easy character? The double string, that awful difficulty on the violin, could not be attacked with greater boldness and equality. The successions of octaves and tenths are masterly in point of precision.

Sivori's manner of overcoming those double passages which he abandons and recommences with the greatest vivacity alternately in major and minor, is enough to drive those who have any idea of the mechanism of the violin giddy. The staccato, the *pointillé,* the *détaché du talon* of the bow, in a word, all the varieties of fingering and bow-striking, pass before us in the pieces executed by Sivori, and in every one of these exercises he defies and excels all his rivals.

But we would dwell but slightly on all these mechanical qualities, precious, rare and extraordinary as they may be, were they not, in Sivori, united to the happiest and most perfect musical organisation; if he did not blend them with the most delightful originality and exquisite grace, the most elevated gifts of style, taste, intelligence, feeling, and expression.

Whether Sivori performs with majesty the first *parte* of his concerto, rises to the *beau idéal* of melodic expression in the *Prayer of Moses,* and the variations of that theme on the fourth string, or gives way to all the sportive caprices of his fancy in the *Carnival of Venice,* that great artist is always equally worthy of our admiration. (*Moniteur Univ.,* 13th Feb. 1843.)

We were not disappointed in our predictions about Sivori. After his triumph at the Conservatoire, and that marvellous

cadenza, which does not last less than four minutes, he played the *Prayer of Moses* with a grandeur, poetry, and depth of feeling which remind you completely of Paganini, whom he does not imitate, but in whom he seems to have embodied himself. It is an affecting and curious spectacle to see so young, pale and slight a man draw sounds of incredible breadth and power from a *Guarnerius*, almost as big as himself.

(*La Presse,* 14th Feb. 1843.) THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

Sivori's concert attracted an immense crowd, and had Herz's rooms been twice as large, they could scarcely have accommodated the admirers of that splendid talent, which has so rapidly acquired renown, and which we were the first to do justice to. The *Clochette* and the *Prayer of Moses* obtained a success unexampled since Paganini. But, alas! this concert is the last.

(*La Presse.*) THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

Let us say a word about those gay and delightful assemblies of Lablache, of his *salons* in which the most splendid pictures of the ancient as well as modern masters are displayed with the most exquisite taste. What would one not give for that magnificent page of Veronese, which illumines with its vivid, varied and ever glowing colours a whole gallery of chefs d'œuvre, large and small? Last Friday's entertainment was more brilliant and delightful even than the first : it was heightened by the presence of the star of the season, Camillo Sivori. Nothing we have been hitherto acquainted with can be compared to that wonderful artist's performance. He played Paganini's *Clochette,* a piece preeminently distinguished for grace, fancy and the most enchanting originality. Prodigious, immense, unheard of, is

all we can say of Sivori. It is needless to add that the artist obtained a fresh triumph.

(*La France musicale,* 19th Feb. 1843.)

What shall we say of M. Ponchard's last entertainment? That it was splendid, dazzling, uniting a perfect selection of music, artists of first rate talent and a most distinguished assembly.

(*Here follows the programme.*)

Could a more brilliant programme have been imagined? Every piece was followed by the most rapturous applause. The lion of the evening, the king of the fête was Camillo Sivori. This celebrated artist, who is equal to Paganini, produced an incredible sensation. In De Bériot's variations, he transported his audience by the grandeur of his performance and the pathos of his expression; it is impossible to describe Camillo Sivori's marvellous execution. Those who heard him play De Bériot's variations can say that never, no, never, was a violinist heard to move and transport with more passion and energy. A hundred and fifty ladies rose at the end of the piece, and loudly called for the *Carnival of Venice,* which Sivori played amidst bravos and applause. Here we have an artist, an artist of genius, who will everywhere be regarded as one of the most amazing and original characters of the age.

(*La France musicale,* 26th Feb. 1843.)

Camillo Sivori's second concert took place on Friday evening, in M. Herz's rooms. It is scarcely necessary to say that there was not a single seat unoccupied, and that more than four hundred persons were obliged to stand in the passages and *foyers.* Such a fact will surprise no one. Sivori is the lion of the season. He is the object of universal attention, and as he does not perform

too frequently either at private houses or public concerts, those who wish to hear him must follow where he summons the crowd. On Friday, Sivori was admirable from beginning to end ; full at the same time of fancy, feeling, dignity, vivacity, softness ; in a word, of all that constitutes perfection. He is, without doubt, the most extraordinary artist of the present day.

The first part of his second concerto offers every moment fresh effects of the most amazing difficulty. There, as in his first concerto, you have a prodigious cadenza which lasts nearly five minutes — and keeps the audience in breathless attention : — it is the feat of a man of genius. The public was electrified by this first piece, and the artist had to return twice to thank his numerous admirers who recalled him with the most rapturous enthusiasm.

In Beethoven's sonate in A, Sivori proved that he understood the music of the classical school, and that he could play it in perfection : this must have given great delight to those ultra-severe artists and amateurs whom Sivori's and even Paganini's music does not completely satisfy. The execution of that master-piece was irreproachable from one end to the other. Hallé played the piano-part in a most remarkable manner. The success was shared between the two artists, and we may safely affirm that we never enjoyed a more delightful musical treat.

Next we had the *Clochette* and the *Prayer of Moses :* the *Clochette,* the most exquisite of Paganini's productions which he gave in manuscript to his pupil, and the *Prayer of Moses,* that majestic composition, so original, so varied in its effects ! The public were in ecstacy; the attention with which they followed the performance was not suspended for a moment ; the prodigies that rushed from their eyes to their ears held them in mute admiration. The applause was deafening, and when the great artist reached the end of his wonderful performance, enthusiasm was carried to the highest pitch. (*France musicale.*)

In the first place comes Camillo Sivori, an exceptional violinist, as a connoisseur called him. If it had not been known that Sivori was Paganini's pupil, it would easily have been suspected by the incredible boldness of his play, by that species of musical Quixotism which impels him to go in quest of adventures on the handle of his violin, by the majestic expression of his play, the velocity of his passages, the perfection with which he executes the *pizzicato* mingled with bow-striking, the trillo and all the double note passages. Nevertheless it is impossible to accept Paganini's violin on the strength of an inventory. If Sivori possesses the qualities of his master, he also has his eccentricities and defects. He is not satisfied with astonishing and moving, he is rather fond of buffoonery; so that after executing the *Prayer of Moses* with admirable feeling, he passes on to the little after-piece, and plays you an interlude in which he makes flute, hautboy and bassoon converse together, and during which it is difficult to preserve one's gravity. Let this be said without detracting one iota from the extraordinary merit of this violinist. I must even confess that in the midst of the greatest excesses, his play is always full of elegance and delicacy. And then, it is not given to every artist, not even to the greatest, to joke in such a manner. That charming piece of buffoonery, the *Carnival of Venice,* has always obtained the honours of an encore. I do not at all feel inclined to be severer than the public. To be fair, I need only add that Sivori made a point to prove in his three concerts that he was familiar with the most splendid of the productions of the great masters, and he played the classical sonata, the duett and trio of Beethoven, and the capricious evolutions of Paganini with equal success.

(*Journal des Débats.*) J. M.

In conclusion we subjoin an article on Sivori from the pen of the wittiest *feuilletoniste* in France :

Let us take courage : the masked ball has retreated into its dark abode; Musard has put a stop to his infernal galop; the unmentionable dance has retired for a whole year; even the Palais-Royal has scarcely ventured to give us its *Soupers du Carnaval,* or the Théâtre de la Gaieté its *l'Amour à l'Aveuglette.* It is true, we have had, since we must conceal nothing, *les Mystères du Carnaval, la Veille, le Jour et le Lendemain du Mardi Gras, les Débardeurs* and *Madame Pétard;* but to cut matters short, we have got rid of those miserable fooleries; the hour of serious productions is at hand. The Académie Royale promises us a five act opera, the Théâtre Français a trilogy signed by an illustrious name, and the second Théâtre Français a tragedy, the work of a young author, around which are already collected all the jealousies, cabals, and fierce declamations that only wait for the success of the piece to explode on every side. And we are to enjoy the benefit of all these promises within a week hence! Meanwhile other artists, I was almost about to say other poets, who for an instant had been kept at a distance by the awful din that resounded from the ball-rooms, have taken advantage of the first moments of silence to obtain a hearing from the nation, which had recovered its self-possession. Most of them are artists of acknowledged eminence, all come from far, to claim from Paris some portion of that transient fame and fugitive glory which Paris has never denied to any one. Soon every one of them will return to his respective country, displaying his crowns, something like our novelists and vaudeville-writers, when they return from Italy or Germany, with an additional cross to their button-hole.

The first of these wandering artists is no less a person than the pupil and immediate heir of Paganini himself. His name is

Camillo Sivori. His mother was about to give him birth, when Paganini used to come and visit her every evening; to soothe the lady's sufferings, he played his sweetest tunes, so that Camillo Sivori came into the world in the middle of a symphony. The child did not prove unworthy of his origin nor of his master's lessons. He soon applied himself to that terrible duel with the violin, the most formidable and undaunted of all antagonists. Soon Paganini initiated young Camillo into those mysteries which he had penetrated with so much labour and genius. Unfortunately, the master died half-way on the road to glory and fortune which he had pursued in his dreams. On a sudden he died, the richest and most discontented (next to Rossini) of all the artists of Italy. His remains are still awaiting the honours of Christian burial — a subject of great satisfaction and a capital prospectus for M. Gannal, the embalmer.

Paganini being no more, the prodigious talent which he had conquered had vanished into air : no trace remained of that troubled spirit that revealed itself in his plaintive violin. Those even among us who, during the dismal days of the cholera, had heard that man dressed in black play the *Prayer of Moses* as if he had been a visitant from the other world, asked themselves whether they had really beheld a creature of flesh and blood. The remembrance of that man who had appeared and disappeared like a shadow, had become an object of doubt in Paris, in that city where life ebbs so rapid and feverishly, and which finds it hard to imagine that a man can be a great artist by making so little noise.

Paganini, however, possessed more foresight than might have been expected from one so jealous of the slightest sound that escaped from the instrument which he held in his hands. It is true that in his life-time that terrible artist would never perform on the violin except for immense sums of money; it is true that when by chance he yielded to the passion of playing for his own ears

alone, he would not allow any one to hear his performance from without, not even the traveller passing on the way, the beggar who might stop at his threshold, or the pretty, sprightly girl, with bright and inquisitive eye, who holding her breath, might enter the dark passage, to listen to the spectre-musician celebrating his own *de Profundis*. Paganini would never consent to play unless paid in advance : so that when he wished to perform his airs of gladness and triumph, he used to put a sourdine on his instrument. I imagine, and this I mention to his praise, that herein lay his chief avarice. He was very fond of money, but he was still fonder of a scale on the fourth string, the string of his own adoption. This in fact was evident, since we saw the same man, after refusing to play for ten minutes for the benefit of the poor, beg a French artist to accept of twenty thousand francs, if he would come and lend him his assistance. That was the reason why he would not die altogether. How indeed was it possible for him to renounce the hope of leaving some remembrance of what he had been? How could he die without leaving some heir to his art? To whom was he to entrust those splendid unpublished compositions which Europe had applauded with so much enthusiasm? That is why he left his violin and manuscripts to young Sivori — a noble legacy indeed, come a little too soon, perhaps, and which Sivori has treated as we treat all legacies which we did not expect, and which we throw away here and there at random, just as we received them. Let us enjoy life, say we; let us squander our unexpected fortune! More than once we even laugh at the worthy man who left it us. It was well worth your while, old miser, to secure your chest with so many locks, and to put a sourdine on your violin! Ah! you did not choose those noble works of your fancy and genius to be wasted on every hearer, and it was for yourself only that you wrote those divine melodies, composed with so much labour and care; that you counted the hours and mi-

nutes of your marvellous instrument — well, I, your heir, I am determined that your violin shall be heard every day, every night, at every hour. The street shall know by heart the exquisite symphonies which you revealed to the initiated alone; your melodies shall be hummed in every hole and corner as if they were comic opera tunes; quadrilles and waltzes shall be composed from your airs and performed by strolling orchestras. That shall be my future glory! The heir to your money may squander your piastres, your roubles and your gold philips; I will be prodigal of your most secret ideas, of your most unpublished melodies; I will play them as it may suit my own pleasure, on one string or on four, with or without an orchestra, in every tone, in every measure, according to the caprice of the audience. The pieces that you performed so melodiously, and in which you delighted to repeat lamentations without end, I will turn into strains of glee and merriment : where you discovered the gay rose-coloured tales related by youth, I will perform an elegy; in the passages where you were simple and affecting, I will abandon myself to the feats of the most dexterous digitalism; and when by chance I shall meet with feats of your invention, I will elude the difficulty and give your note as if you had not surrounded it with dangers. That is what I will do, for I am the possessor of your instruments, of your manuscripts and of your art — that shall be my delight — for now that you are dead, who is to remember you — a phantom, a dream, a being nobody ever thought of, who never spoke to any one—a name—the echo of a sound lost in air — Paganini !

Such was the singular effect produced on us on seeing this young man, Camillo Sivori. Youthful, slight and smiling, he reminded us of a statue of dance and song, standing on the yet empty tomb of the mournful and gloomy Paganini. To hear him you would not call his play a prudent and clever imitation, but a parody replete with wit, grace and vivacity.

All the grandeur and majesty of the master has disappeared to give place to the brilliant impetuosity, inexhaustible raciness, joy and petulancy of the pupil. The former was grand, profound, gloomy and solemn; the latter is buoyant, heedless, satisfied with life, hurried on by his juvenile ardour. His gaiety is almost carried to exaggeration, his levity to the verge of excess, his energy to the extreme of audacity.

(*Journal des Débats.*) J. JANIN.

Sivori next visited Belgium; and public crowns, medals, etc., were showered on him wherever he played. After two concerts given for the benefit of the poor, at Antwerp and at Liege, (which produced more than 5,000 fr., an enormous sum in Belgium, where concerts are extremely unproductive) he was presented with a very rich crown which was placed on his head; and a magnificent silver-gilt cup with this inscription : « *The poor of Liege to Camillo Sivori, as a token of esteem and gratitude.* » And although Belgium is certainly not the country of enthusiasm, let us see whether the gentlemen of the Belgian press did not shake off their usual apathy in favour of Sivori :

It is perfect! it is divine! It is impossible to hear any thing more extraordinary! — Such were the words that circulated yesterday, at our theatre, a few moments after Camillo Sivori's wonderful performance.

We, who never had occasion to judge Paganini, do not remember ever hearing the violin played in such perfection as by his pupil, Sivori. He is a complete talent, in the widest

meaning of the word. This is not even saying enough, for Sivori produces on his instrument effects which imagination could never have ventured to conceive. It is the beauty of mechanism carried to the highest degree.

We never felt very sincere sympathy for those artists whose talent may be summed up in the merit of difficulties overcome, because, in truth, it is not therein that art consists. However, it is in this respect that Sivori excels, it is his style, and yet his violin transported us to enthusiasm!

It is because it is impossible to offer a more complete, a more perfect assemblage of all the qualities that constitute the great violinist; because, beneath Sivori's bow, the violin ceases, one might say, to be a violin, and becomes a voice whose accents, now lofty and terrible as the sounds of the tempest, now gentle, delicate, coquettish and murmuring as a bewitching tattle, produce as much emotion as surprise; because if the artist astonishes by the magic of his play, he is able, when it suits him, to make his instrument sing, and to do this, like every thing else, in perfection.

. . . . . .

From what we have heard of Paganini's style, Sivori entirely devotes himself to its reproduction. What must the master have been, when the pupil is so admirable? It is the same school, full of caprice, fancy and audacity, — the same richness of harmony, the same intention in its effects, the same flight from the original to the unexpected. It requires all the expression of Sivori's talent to venture to adopt such a style and to obtain such success in it.

What beauty and grandeur of sound! what correctness and purity! what exquisite taste in the slightest traits! what power and what suavity!

We allow our pen to run on, — multiplying our exclamations, without being able to give our reader a complete idea of

Sivori's talent. We forgot to mention that the facility with which he surmounts the most arduous difficulties is equally inconceivable. The artist's attitude is certainly ungraceful; but with what a masterly hand he holds his instrument; his bow resembles an enchanter's wand, whose fantastic gambols on the strings it is almost impossible to follow!

Sivori played three times yesterday evening. He first performed a concerto of his composition, then a charming production of Paganini, the *Clochette,* and finished by the air of the *Carnival of Venice,* a burlesque theme, or, we ought rather to say, rendered so by the artist; it is impossible not to laugh at the strange effects which he produces.

Unceasing rounds of applause followed each of Sivori's pie ces... etc. (*Journal de Liége,* 13th March 1844.)

To do justice to the artist who played last evening at our theatre, we ought to be able to invent new expressions with the same facility with which M. Sivori produces such new, extraordinary and astounding effects on the instrument which his immense talent, or rather, his genius, has succeeded in submitting to all his caprices. In vain we might repeat that his play is grand, varied, transporting; that the powerful sounds which he draws from his instrument flow pure and limpid; that his fingers, his bow, seem to have forgotten what used to be called difficulties — all that can be said of any first-rate performer; but such praises are insufficient when applied to M. Sivori, and incapable of giving a correct and complete idea of that artist's talent.

M. Sivori is not only a musician, but a painter and an orator. As a musician, he charms you with his melodious strains, now graceful, tender, melancholy, now lively, gay, brilliant, full of

animation; he is a painter, for his bow does not produce sounds only; his melodies are pictures, which he groups, varies and even colours; and which present and retrace to the imagination of the fascinated hearer, the innumerable objects that successively possess the imagination of the artist. He is an orator, for his instrument speaks; its melodious accents express not only sentiments, ideas, passions, but give rise to them in our hearts; it mourns, weeps, sighs, laughs or jests, according as the master wishes to express sorrow, grief, joy, happiness or pleasure.

His *Carnival of Venice* produced a prodigious effect : it is a piece that belongs at the same time to heaven and to hell. A melody soft and gentle as a concert of angels is followed, without any transition, by harsh and Satanic sounds, such as the devil's violin must produce; if he tries to delight, to seduce you, beware; it is but a trick; he suddenly stops in the midst of these heavenly sounds, and makes you shudder with a wild shriek, an infernal laugh. This fantastic music was received with enthusiasm and encored.

The above is an exact account of the various impressions which we felt whilst listening to the three pieces performed yesterday by M. Sivori — impressions which were felt, no doubt, by all those who heard him, and which will be eagerly sought for by all such as had not the good fortune to experience those exquisite sensations.

(*Tribune de Liége,* 13th March 1844.)

Thrice we have witnessed the wonders realized by Sivori's magical instrument; thrice we were present at a success always more brilliant and more deserved.

To day, it is not only to the eminent artist that we have to

address our praises, but to the generous and disinterested artist. Convinced that the noblest use he can make of his talent is to devote it to the relief of the wretched, Camillo Sivori has consented, with the best grace in the world, to perform at the concert that is to take place on Friday, for the benefit of the sufferers from the late inundation.

The concert, we have no doubt, will be composed with taste and discernment. Sivori will play several of those pieces that have the privilege of pleasing, affecting, and surprising, and that are always rewarded with the most unanimous applause, etc.

(*Tribune de Liége,* 19th March 1844.)

Bravo, bravissimo! signor Sivori, only and unique pupil of the Napoleon of the violin! It shall not be said at least that the kingdom of Paganini is fallen a prey to petticoat government. What a thunderbolt of harmony, what a colossus of talent, or rather what a colossal talent!

It cannot be very difficult, said our right hand neighbour: see how he does it without labour or effort! — Why, of course, answered another on the left, it is the soul of Paganini, which has remained in his violin, and which continues to speak long after the bow has left the strings.

It is a hopeless case for us, cried a "first prize" of the Conservatoire of Brussels. — See how the drops run down my forehead, exclaimed the director of our chorusses.

As to M. de Bériot, he forsook his usual calm and reserved demeanour to applaud and cry bravo louder than any body else; and every one got on the benches to catch a glimpse of this new demon of music, whose face reminds you of Paganini's in his youth, so much so that you would say he was his son.

We must do the audience justice. At the first stroke, which seemed to enter the string like an axe cleaving a block, every one perceived whom he had to deal with. That is what you may call a violin! a violin of steel, wood or velvet; not like those vinegar sellers who occasionally come to set our teeth on edge with lemon juice, and to scrape catgut with horse hair.

Sivori tickles his instrument with extreme ease, he makes it weep, sing, jest, snore, whistle and laugh by turns. Poor soul of Paganini! If it be really imprisoned in Sivori's violin, as Alphonse Karr thinks, it must quiver when it sees him take the bow in his hand!!

Feats of legerdemain! the herd of common-place talents will exclaim; no body esteems such trickery!—Poor foxes, the grapes are not ripe enough! for you cannot do a single thing that Sivori does, and Sivori shows you that he can do all you can, and without any trouble, if he takes it into his head.

Take us, as he does, to the *Piazza di San Marco* at Venice, and show us that far-famed carnival. Let us see those masks of every age, class and hue, from the child to the old man, from the grisette to the duchess, from the saucy student to the brutal gondolier! See how they pass before your eyes, in bands of four, six, twenty, dance a *ronde* and disappear! Yonder, yonder! what is that merry crowd with harlequins at their head? Here they come, mind when they pass. *Che scherzo! bella Colombina! brutto Pantalone!* Do you hear them murmuring *amoroso : Mio bene! alma mia!* Who is that falling down yonder, and sprawling with a grunt? Oh, it is that lumbering *Pulcinella!—Per Bacco!* he is drunk! And that stupid Pierrot, how false he sings! Make room, make room! Here is the great *Farandola* overthrowing every thing in its way! What a tumult! what joy! what folly!

Sivori shows you all that. Sivori is a great painter. There is no pallet in the world capable of producing a merrier, noi-

sier, more elegant, more lively and more trivial picture than the one which he gives us of the joys of the *Carnival of Venice.*

All Belgium will wish to hear this musical comet that is now passing over Europe, not to return perhaps, before a thousand years.

Is it possible, after hearing Sivori, to remember the other artists who figured behind him ?

The band were so magnetised that they did not the least in the world think of accompanying Sivori. He was obliged to turn round at each *ritornello* to rouse them. At the end of the concert, they were seen clustering together at the bottom of the orchestra, and were heard to whisper : It is not a man, it is the devil in person come to deceive us ; that's sure ! !

(*Courrier Belge.*)

After astonishing the capital of Belgium, Ghent, Antwerp, Liége, etc., Sivori returned to Paris, where he gave one of the most brilliant concerts ever witnessed at the Italian Opera. Here we are completely bewildered by the number of articles before us; let us take two at random :

Sivori's concert took place at the Italian Opera, before a numerous and select assembly. Camillo Sivori has been the musical lion of the season ; and, since Paganini, no violinist has met with such success ; a success well merited in every respect and for which he is in no wise indebted to trickery. Sivori's execution is really prodigious, displaying an inconceivable ease, caprice, *brio* and audacity — he does impossibilities as if they cost him no trouble. His variations on Paganini's *Carnival of*

Venice exceed every thing that can be imagined in shape of difficulties, and these are overcome in so triumphant a manner that it would seem that to play on the violin were the easiest thing in the world. The old Venetian air which serves as the theme to these marvellous caprices is exquisite, and is worth whole cart-loads of operas; it is joyful and melancholy at the same time: tears and laughter are blended together; and when you hear Sivori play it, all sorts of fantastic visions flit across your mind. You see the white doves of San Marco skimming through the azure sky, and the gondolas gliding under the marble bridges: each note as it passes by wrapped up in the *bautta* of black lace, lifts up its velvet mask for an instant and discovers a once loved countenance. The modulations rock you languishingly like becalmed waves, and you would lose yourself completely in your revery, did not a nasal, chuckling passage, like the giggling of a group of masks, suddenly rouse you and bring the smile back to your lips.

(*La Presse.*) THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

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What shall we say about the triumph which Sivori obtained on Thursday last at the Italian Opera? He played three times, and three times the house rung with applause. His third piece, the *Carnival of Venice,* electrified the audience to such a degree, that it was unanimously encored, and the artist's performance was even more extraordinary the second time than the first. After such a spontaneous and perhaps unexampled triumph, what will those mongrel violinists say, who pretend that Sivori imposes on the public by mere trickery? Paganini met with the same reproach: the pupil, we may say, the rival of that illustrious master, is above criticism proceeding from jealousy or

ignorance. We can fearlessly declare that Sivori may travel over Europe; and that he will everywhere be proclaimed the most extraordinary violinist of the age. (*La France Musicale.*)

But however flattered Camillo Sivori might be by his successes in Italy, France, Belgium, Germany, Russia, etc., the place he was the most anxious to visit was London; London, where his illustrious master and friend had met with such prodigious and incredible success. He set off therefore for that capital. Arrived in London three seasons back, he gave his first concert at Her Majesty's Theatre : let us quote a few words on this *début :*

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

. . . . . .

The first thing that strikes the eye is, that the young *débutant* is the complete reproduction of Paganini himself; the face is different, but otherwise it is the great artist resuscitated. There is the same peculiar manner of holding the violin, with the elbow completely turned in, the same position of the legs, the same swing of the whole body from the hips, and the same commanding jerk with the bow. Since the time of Paganini many performers have imitated his mechanism with more or less success, with more or less refinement; but none of them have caught up his spirit, and one by one they have dropped into oblivion. With Sivori it is otherwise : he has not only inherited the arm and fingers of his preceptor, but he has caught his spirit also.

Of the style of Sivori as a violinist, and of his pretensions to

be considered the first of his day, we must say as to the former, that it is unquestionably modelled upon that of his inspired master, *but without any servile imitation;* and, with respect to his claims to be now looked upon as the greatest, the only worthy representative of that gifted genius, we believe that even the most emulous rivalry has admitted them. In fact, he is Paganini *idem et alter.* But let us first consider in what points of superlative excellence he has identified himself with his magician tutor; and next regard him *pause,* and inquire if he have any genius beyond that of the mocking-bird; and again, if so, how does that genius develope itself. In the first place, his TONE (we do not mean that of his *fiddle,* which happens to have been his master's favourite instrument)—his power over the modulation of sound, is, in every respect, equal to Paganini's, from the rich swells of organic fulness, to

> Such as the melting soul may pierce
> In notes with many a *winding* bout
> *Of linked sweetness, long drawn out*
> *With wanton heed and giddy cunning!*

The words we have *italicized* show how prophetic Milton was of the advent of such performers—no pictures could more faithfully depict the *manners* of Paganini and his familiar! In the next place, Sivori's wand-like influence with his bow—at one time *non-visibly* vibrating a thousand delicate tremblings upon the ear; at another, "tearing out of the sanguine strings" superhuman sounds, with all the frenzied gesticulation of "one possessed;" again mocking difficulty (we had almost said impossibility) with a host of graceful and, to him, facile realities; in a word,

> Untwisting all the chains that tie
> The hidden soul of harmony!

In each and all of these Sivori is quite equal to Paganini! But yet some will say, "With all this, although he is decidedly the first now, he is not Paganini yet!" No—perhaps not. But why is this conclusion arrived at? Simply because a *great wonder,* in any view of creation, must be succeeded by a *far greater one* before we can allow it to be even on equality with its predecessor! We heard Paganini in the height of his glory, we hear Sivori in the very outset of his fame, and yet we have difficulty to decide which, "at times ripe for competition," shall be estimated as the greater genius. Had there been no Tintoretto, perhaps there would have been no Titian; and, so far, we admit the obligations the present youth is under to the seer his master. But if he were not possessed of a master mind of his own he could not have distinguished himself in that walk which belongs not to the *servile pecus,* namely, original composition. His concerto is a most pure and classical production, and does great honour to his head, if his digitals were no more than those of ordinary first-rate violinists. This, by far the most classical part of his performance, was received with comparative indifference by those who were anxiously waiting for the *bizarreries* promised subsequently. A word or two here on that wonder-exciting announcement "on one string." There is really nothing in it, many passages for the violin could not otherwise be played so effectively; and as to its novelty, only turn back to the solos of Scaramelli, upwards of a century ago, not to say anything of the concertos and airs of Rode, Rosquellas, etc., in more modern times, but anterior to Paganini, and it will be found that occasional use of the "one string" was much in vogue, although perhaps it was never carried to such perfection as by Paganini and his pupil. One word at parting for the present with Sivori: let anybody else attempt to play Paganini's music and they become contemptible; on the other hand, let *him* perform it, and it is worthy of the *maestro* him-

self, involving us in "a pleasant dream of past, mixt up with present joy." (*The Illustrated London News.*)

Shortly after the same paper expressed itself as follows:

CAMILLO SIVORI.

Who says the age of song is o'er,
Or that the mantle finely wrought
Which hung upon the bards of yore
Has fall'n to earth and fall'n uncaught?

The dying bequest of Paganini, namely his favourite violin to his beloved and only pupil, has given birth to a belief in a novel kind of metempsychosis — that the genius or soul of the *maestro* was transferred to the *élève* by the gift: such superstitions are quite worthy of those who imagined that *il diavolo Paganini* had his violin manufactured from the wood of his father's coffin, with many other absurdities of a similar nature. Sivori is universally allowed on the Continent to be the first performer on his difficult instrument now living, and we are prepared to add to the opinion by saying that perhaps he can "enchant our ears" more deliciously still than the magician his master. The compositions which he played for Perrot's benefit at Her Majesty's Theatre on Thursday week were a *concerto* composed by himself and Paganini's "Carnaval de Venise," which he played so supernaturally that he left us "gaping with mute wonder and delight;" and, consequently, feeling the inadequacy of language to convey any idea of his miraculous powers, we must request our readers to forego any demand of detailed description on our parts, and advise them to hasten as soon as possible to hear, not an *artiste,*

but an inspired genius, a personification in musical power of the angel Israfil himself, who (we almost fear to express it) is the *greatest* violinist that has yet appeared. Mr Lumley, you have conferred an eternal obligation on the musical world by engaging this living miracle! (*The Illustrated London News.*)

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

The morning's rehearsal which took place yesterday at this theatre introduced us to one of the most singular instrumental performers whom we have ever heard. Camillo Sivori, of whose life we gave a few particulars, on Tuesday last, is Paganini's only pupil, and is the direct heir of that wonderful master's surpassing power. With him, as with Paganini, the instrument becomes no longer a mere tool. It is part of himself — one and indivisible. While he plays, he thinks, talks, weeps, laughs, and sighs through his violin. This execution is an inspiration, and the notes flow from his bow as if they were uttered by the soul of the musician rather than produced by his hand. In the tenderer and more plaintive portions of his *adagio* such was the *larmoyant* beauty of his execution, that he drew tears into our eyes: and that fancy might well have been excused, which indulged itself in the folly of imagining it heard the wail of some melancholy spirit grieving over its imprisonment in the instrument from which the voice of the matchless melody proceeded. The compositions which he played were a *concerto,* written by himself, and Paganini's *Carnaval de Venise.* The *canto,* with single and double shakes, which occurs in the second part of the *concerto,* was a difficulty superbly vanquished, with the true ease and quiet manipulation of a master, and the breathless attention and unanimous *bravi* which burst from the orchestra at its conclu-

sion, proved how fully they appreciated its difficulty, and the skill of Sivori. But while we notice this terrible passage, as far as the mere hand is concerned, we must recur to Sivori's transcendant tone and powers of expression. The mere difficulty is with him no charlatanical exhibition of technical skill introduced for its own sake, but an enrichment of his *thema*, dictated by the most consummate taste and introduced by as consummate science. Camillo Sivori is a genius. He does not abuse his wonderful ease of hand, although he avails himself of it. The qualities which he primarily seeks are tone and soul, and in these, with the exception of his wonderful predecessor, we confess we know no violinist that has yet approached him. Paganini's revelling description of the Venetian Carnival will be yet fresh in the memory of those who have heard the deceased master. While it is full of a technical strength, which somewhat smacks of empiricism, if we may apply such a term to a musical score, it teems with that class of original ideas which Paganini invented, and can never be heard without the most intense relish for its oddity, as well as the greatest wonder at its mechanical difficulties. These last were attacked with an ease and audacity by Sivori, which we have only seen paralleled in the original composer. His descent of the chromatic scale was effected with transcendant finish and delicacy, and the lightning-like velocity of his *staccato* passages is entirely inexpressible by description. The ear and eye can alone do justice to them. Nor can we forbear an allusion, in the highest terms of eulogium, to the quiet beauty with which the *pizzicato* accompaniment on the violoncello and the pedal note throughout the *capriccio* were thrown in by the orchestra. The *personnel* of Sivori decidedly belongs to the eccentric class; but you do not remember the oddity of the *petite* figure which stands before you when it commences to play. From that moment you are borne away with the stream of the performer's melody — now almost weeping with the ten-

derness of an *adagio* passage — then carried away by the *staccato,* which streams around the hearer like a shower of sunshine; and then again listening to a solemn gush of organ-like tone as the artist sinks into a more sombre spirit. Throughout the rehearsal, both of the *concerto* and the *capriccio,* the artist was applauded, as we have never yet heard an artist applauded by the orchestra, and the quiet subdued *bravi* which occasionally burst from them as a subtler beauty marked the execution of the performer, or a more marvellous difficulty was subdued by him, testified, yet more strongly to their admiration than the regular bursts of noisier applause which accompanied his whole performance. (*The Morning Post.*)

Afterwards Sivori gave four concerts in the Hanover Square Rooms, and two at the concert-room of the Princess's Theatre. He was engaged at the Philharmonic on several occasions, played at almost all the concerts, and in the most distinguished houses in London, and never received less than thirty guineas for a night's performance.

Every English amateur wished to know Sivori, and converse with him; every body begged for some token of remembrance, a card, the least word, his signature, etc. Never did any artist, except Paganini, meet with such a reception, and produce such a *furore.*

SIVORI'S FAREWELL CONCERT.

This was literally "a bumper at parting" to the Genoese, at the Hanover Square Rooms, on Monday last. The *salon* was literally crammed with rank, fashion, an *dilettanteeism.* He

played four times, at each time surpassing himself, for he is a creature of enthusiasm, and kindles into higher rapture when he is warmly and judiciously applauded. The first piece was a concertante duetto, for piano-forte and violin, on the "Fra poco" of Donizetti, which was most exquisitely performed on the piano by Benedict, as well as on the violin by the *beneficiaire*. The second a fantasia, on the fourth string, on themes from the "Sonnambula." These two pieces were the compositions of Sivori, and do him as much honour by their creation as their performance. The third, Paganini's "Nel cor più;" and lastly, the Andante composed by himself to "The Carnival," with variations of his own, of Paganini and of Ernst, entitled a "Souvenir de Paganini." Each of these pieces received applause to the echo, particularly the fantasia, than which nothing could be more soul-moving or expressive. Altogether we could not but perceive that he literally *wrang* the most enthusiastic plaudits from many who, up to his eve of departure, had tried to "damn him with faint praise," and all because he does not possess the same quantity of noise in his tone as some others, for they could not "prate of his fingers or their whereabouts." But if, as we have before now observed, the quality of his *voice* on the instrument be more attenuated than that of some of his supposed rivals, that very circumstance renders it more subtle and insinuating. But enough of this. Sivori stands the first in the world as a violinist, and even "fills up the pause that Paganini made."

(*The London Illustrated News.*)

THE PHILHARMONIC CONCERT.

. . . . . .

Conceive how startled I was to see Paganini again, who has been dead three years, though not buried, for he lies above

ground embalmed at Genoa. The church, believing him possessed of the devil, refuse him Christian burial. A being like *him* stepped on the stage amid thunders of applause, who with the first stroke of his bow electrified the audience, and convinced me that old Pag had come again. Never did I hear such delicious long-drawn-out sound, as from the bow of Sivori. The first touch gave a language that literally it may be said the fiddle spoke. He stands in the same posture—the same swing of body as Paganini; under this motion he throws his flowers—lovely bits of melody—among the audience. In the midst of this delight, which rocks you into elysium—he breaks off into his devilry—which continues for a time, when all is hush, and you hear the cries and sobs of the infant in his arms. Though not so intense in passion as Paganini, he is more natural, sweet, and refined. The prodigies of play are equally astonishing. The sounds seem to fly upwards and to the height of three octaves above the lines. The pizzicato accompaniment to his lovely cantabiles is that of the castanets gently played. It is said of Sivori and his master, that they never feel the full inspiration of play till they see the devils' tails come out at the S holes of the fiddle. He is either in the infernal regions or in paradise. The applause was so great at the shake which terminated his concerto, that not a sound of the hundred performers in the orchestra could be heard. (*The Globe.*)

THE MELODISTS' CLUB.

. . . . . .

The instrumental selection was Jarrett's horn fantasia, some movements of the sonata for pianoforte and violin by Beethoven (dedicated to Kreutzer), played by Benedict and Sivori, and the

first movement of Sivori's concerto. Jarrett has been labouring for some time under indisposition, but his playing last night was never better. There was an equality of tone and steadiness of execution beyond what he had heretofore achieved. He was most deservedly applauded. The duet between Benedict and Sivori was delicious. They both grasped the spirit and meaning of the composer, and their united efforts were as full of poetry as the composition itself. That Benedict can play Beethoven exquisitely is no secret, but he seems to take some pains to make it one, by favouring us so rarely with his performances. We have met him so frequently, of late, merely as a brilliant accompanyist, that we feared he was about to eschew the practical and the classical. The appearance of Sivori, as the interpreter of Beethoven, sets at rest the question, if ever it has been one, as to his capability of executing every school of music. He produced the most luscious tone, and the most earnest of his applauders was Spohr, who watched every movement of the young Genoese with the most intense interest and evident admiration. In his own concerto Sivori's scintillations were quite exciting. In his cadence the coruscations were most startling. Surprise succeeded surprise—marvel after marvel came, and yet another and another—it was start eyes and ears. Sivori was, no doubt, urged to extra exertion by the presence of Spohr. The contrast between these two great violinists, each distinguished by the finest attributes, was very striking. Spohr is of colossal stature, and looks more like an ancient Roman than a Brunswicker; Sivori is the antithesis of Spohr in stature. Spohr has the severe phlegmatic Teutonic aspect; Sivori has the flashing Italian eye and variability of feature. Spohr stands firm and still; Sivori's body is all on the swing—he tears the notes, as it were, from his instrument. Spohr's refinement and polish have been the characteristics of his playing; in Sivori it is the wild energy—the soul in arms—the determination to be up and doing—the daring

impulse of youthful genius. Spohr's playing is remarkable for its repose and finish; Sivori electrifies by the most powerful appeals to the affections. We might go on *ad infinitum*.

(*Morning Post.*)

SIVORI'S CONCERT.

There must be something more than meets the eye and salutes the ear in the playing of Camillo Sivori. He performs, it is true, on the violin bequeathed to him by Paganini: but did the latter assign over his *soul* at the same time to his favoured pupil, and, if so, is there not some justice on the side of the priestly authorities to refuse the unburied bones of Paganini the luxury of consecrated ground? We never can believe the execution of Sivori to be of the earth—earthy. What can be the meaning of that mysterious platform upon which he places himself? Is there some concealed orchestra on whose agency he relies to make his instrument speak in all voices? Is some spirit or sprite hidden in that square box on which he stands with such a swinging grace, producing such marvellous tones—now tearing the heart by some outpouring of grief—now raising the smile by some grotesque cadence—and now startling all hearers from their propriety by some tremendous feat? What can be Sivori's secret? Would that some feminine divinity could extract it from him with the tact appertaining to the fairer portion of the creation, and would then communicate it to all the world with the readiness to disclose secrets, also their peculiar characteristic. But we are bewildered and bewitched, and we know not how the spell of enchanter is derived. We are perplexed, for we desire to prove our critical skill by detecting flaws, and yet we cannot. Sivori defies our judgment, and laughs to scorn all attempts to define

his enormous power by conventional terms. There he stands, diminutive it is true. and requiring the aforesaid block of wood to raise him to the ordinary standard of mortals; but then that flashing eye, that wild sweep of the strings, that prodigiously long bow that he draws, eliciting tones imitative of all instruments! The oboe's plaintiveness—the flute's lover-like breathings—the rich clarinet's swell—the viola's breadth of feeling—the tinkling bell—the human voice divine in all its phases—the cry of the child, the lament of the adult, and the querulous intonations of age—all—all are there in expressive eloquence. With Sivori we smile and we weep in turns. Now his instrument is all tears. It tells a piteous tale of all "hope delayed that maketh the heart sick," or it raves in despairing tones at a bitter disappointment. Hurried phrases of massive grandeur excite to action, and the love of glory follows the desponding theme. We rush to the Carnival to dissipate all worldly cares, and in the reckless gaiety of the masquers the sigh of the forlorn maiden and the language of woe are forgotten.

Thus do we translate Sivori. If we take the poet's license and rave, we do but imitate the enormous assemblage of last night at the Hanover Square Rooms. We cannot fathom the thoughts and feelings of the hundreds who cheered and cheered, and cheered again. For ourselves, we answer Sivori's playing is an epic poem, in which we trace design and treatment in every stage of the story. It is the perfection of execution, moving masses to boundless enthusiasm, and exciting even the stoical professors, with all their mechanical experience, to expressions of rapture. We scorn to descend to technicalities with such playing. What have the ordinary achievements of violin performances to do with Sivori? He is there a magician waving a wand which makes every auditor thrill with delight. As a matter of history, we may mention that he played the first movement of his second concerto, the adagio and rondo of the "Clochette"

of Paganini, and the Andante and the "Carnaval de Venise" also by that great master. We may record that he was enthusiastically encored in the latter, and called for at the end of every piece, the band joining the amateurs in vociferous exclamations: but *cui bono* this recital? It never can come up to the reality of the scene as presented to those that were at his concert, and to those who were absent why narrate luxuries in which they have not participated? (*Morning Post.*)

After astonishing the capital, he made the tour of the provinces. It would be impossible to recount all the places at which he has performed, and the number of concerts he has given since his three years sojourn in England. He has played at Dublin fourteen times, at Liverpool nine, in Manchester eight, etc., etc., etc.; in short, he must have appeared at least three hundred times before English audiences in public alone. There is no city to which he has not returned a second, if not a third time, and at each return his success has been greater and greater.

Let us take a few provincial papers at random, and see whether their language differs from that of the journals of the capital:

THE CONCERT.

This took place in the ball-room at the Shire Hall, on Tuesday evening. It was under the patronage of some of the most distinguished families in the neighbourhood, and was attended by a very numerous and fashionable audience. . . . . .

Next came forward he upon whom the expectation of all had been fixed—Camillo Sivori; his fame had preceded him hither, and his appearance was the signal for a burst of applause, which could not fail to be gratifying even to one whose ears have rung with the plaudits of a far more numerous assemblage of his admirers: it was indeed a most hearty "welcome to Chelmsford." There he stood to execute the first movement of a Grand Concertante of his own composition; nor was expectation baulked. With the violin said to have been presented to him by his inspired preceptor Paganini, and with the prodigiously long bow which has been often remarked upon, he performed in a manner and elicited tones, which are said to "defy the judgment and laugh to scorn all attempts to define his enormous power by conventional terms." Truly, so startling in effect, so thrilling in execution are his performances that we feel bound to admit that upon him has the mantle of Paganini fallen, and that in the present day he is the only worthy representative of that great genius, whose spirit he has caught, and whose music he alone is said to be qualified to perform.

As a finale, was produced Paganini's celebrated variations on the "Carnaval de Venise," which must be regarded—if distinction can be at all admitted — as Sivori's *chef-d'œuvre*. The audience enraptured heard the tones melt away in the distance, yet would they not allow their enchanter to retire without again taxing his wondrous powers; amidst enthusiastic applause Sivori, therefore, again appeared, and repeated several variations, after which he withdrew from a fresh scene of his fame, and where, also, another chaplet has been added to his already burdened brow. (*Chelmsford Chronicle*, Aug. 23rd.)

SIGNOR SIVORI'S CONCERT.

Signor Sivori gave his first concert on Saturday. We had gone to the concert rather prepossessed, than otherwise, against this musician, whom Fame had written down a paragon; and we returned almost conscience-smitten, for our doubt— certainly, convinced that for once the oracle had not lied.

To describe the performance of Signor Sivori, is a thing impossible. To afford some idea of it, is almost so. Words are too poor, we might say too unsympathising, to tell of the ravishing melody that gushes from the ungraceful instrument, like a musical rivulet from a rude rock; or to describe all the wild, wayward, unearthly tones, that cry, or moan, or shriek, in obedience to the spirit that conjures them into momentary being. We could not follow all the strange transitions, the inconceivable execution—the exquisite delicacy, and the matchless power of him who wields the instrument, and endows it with an hundred tongues. Could we believe in the transmigration of souls, we might say that the soul of Paganini lived on earth, but under another form. Not believing in it, we are content with asserting, what we feel convinced no man will deny, that the mantle of the immortal teacher has descended on the shoulders of the pupil. Unlike the dead master, the living pupil is rather *petit,* and positively graceful; with pleasing features, intellectual expression, and fine, dark, speaking eyes. Paganini appeared before this world like one who had held communion with the beings of another—like some fleshless magician, who had bartered his soul for matchless art. Sivori, on the contrary, is one of ourselves, the eye alone indicative of the genius that animates. His action is graceful, and eminently expressive. It is a kind of natural eloquence, in harmony

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with the style, the order, and the character of his performance. Such is Sivori.

His first piece was one of his own composition. We have heard some men say that the violin is an imperfect instrument. That might be so, when it is in imperfect hands. With those who cannot themselves go beyond a certain limit, it is finite — in the hands of him whose powers are illimitable, it is infinite in its power and variety. This piece at once tested the marvellous skill of the performer, and the as marvellous capabilities of the instrument. In a word, it spoke. At one moment, it was like the human voice; at another, like the silveriest notes of the tiniest bird — now, it resembled the full swell of the organ ; again, it produced those tones wich one dreams of, but rarely, if ever, hears. Then the execution! rapid, wonderful, fantastic—the very eccentricity of art! He seemed to play with the strings, defying them to produce discord. Now, he ran the most delicate and complex passages on the first string; and in the next moment he growled out music from the lowest depths of the fourth. Amidst a maze of variations, a redundancy of ornament, you still discovered the silver thread of the "sujet" — *that* always struck upon the ear with exquisite distinctness. So much for the first piece, wich was termed *Partie d'un Concerto, in E. M.*

If the first were wonderful, the second was enchanting. One dazzled; the other entranced. It was a beautiful arrangement of Rossini's *Preghiera in Mosè*, by Paganini. This may be termed the very ecstacy of prayer, such as one in which angels might worship the Father of all nature. Among the most delightful works of Rossini, there is none comparable to "the Prayer." Under the bow of Sivori, the senseless strings caught the divine inspiration of the composer, and prayed in melody. For sweetness, depth of feeling, tenderness, softness, *music*, we never before heard anything equal to this performance.

The third was characteristic of the strange genius and extraordinary powers of its arranger, Paganini. It is termed the *Carnaval de Venise;* the air, which is peculiar to the time of the carnival, is known to us under the English form of the ballad "Come to me when day light sets." This indeed was a wonderful performance. It described, almost with the accuracy of the human tongue, the motley crowd, the jovial license, and the comical absurdities of a Carnival, the modern representative of the old *Saturnalia.* The eccentricities, the bustle, the confusion, the Babel sounds—all were shadowed forth in this extraordinary composition. The urchin's squeak is drowned in the hoarse roar of the lusty giant—in fine, every sound that could emanate from a motley crowd, intent on fun and frolic, delivered up to the madness of hilarity, was expressed by the four strings of this magic violin.

Further than what we have written, we can give no more intelligible idea of the powers of one who mocks at every rule of art—defying, because transcending, the cavil of the critic. To say that Sivori was applauded, would be a kind of superfluous assertion, bordering on an insult to the good taste and judgment of his auditory. (*The Cork Examiner,* August 5th, 1844.)

MISS HAMILTON'S CONCERT.

ERNST IN LIVERPOOL.

A numerous and fashionable attendance at the Amphitheatre on Wednesday evening well repaid the enterprise of this deserving vocalist, in securing so large an aggregate of musical ability for her entertainment. We have already given the programme, so it is unnecessary to repeat it here. Its only fault was the superabundance of good things it contained, and which, indeed,

were so much too profuse for the ordinary period assigned to a concert, that many of them had to be omitted; and even then the hour at which the performance terminated was inconveniently late.

The lion of the occasion was, of course, Ernst, the renowned German violinist. The week before last we gave, from very competent sources, a detailed account of the leading characteristics and peculiarities of his playing, and, consequently, all we need do now is to record, as briefly and plainly as may be, our individual impression of the effects it produced on us. First, however, it is but candour, perhaps, to say that the result of all the inquiries we have made respecting the judgment formed among the audience upon his playing, as compared with that of Sivori, leaves the palm of popularity pretty equally divided between the two great rivals. For our own part, we don't know why there should be any hesitation in declaring the Italian superior. There is nothing that Ernst does that Sivori cannot do—most of it better—all of it as well :—there is much that Sivori does which Ernst does not attempt, and much, it may be presumed, that he could not accomplish if he tried. We speak not of mere feats of digital dexterity, by which a handful, more or less, of staccato and pizzicato note is thrown over particular passages, or by which particular passages are effected by the use of the bow in any out-of-the-way fashion. In the merely florid or decorative department of the art, we think there cannot be a second opinion as to the immeasurable supremacy of Sivori; and this must have been abundantly evident to all who heard his "Carnival" at Miss Whitnall's and the Philharmonic Concert, and who heard Ernst on Wednesday night. Not only were the embellishments of the latter comparatively poor in quality and scanty in number, but they were introduced with an apparent laboriousness and hesitation, like a miser parting with his long-hoarded and painfully-acquired coin.

Sivori, on the contrary, riots in the consciousness of exhaustless riches :—like " the gorgeous east" of the poet, which " showers on her kings pearl and gold barbaric," he pours out his wealth without limit or restraint, but not without profound judgment and the purest taste. The beauty of the workmanship is even more surprising than the costliness of the material. His " Carnival " contains all that is most admirable (and that is a great deal) in Ernst's with an infinitude of merits wholly his own, or, if not his own, they are those of Paganini, whose disciple and follower he avowedly is. We admit that the two compositions are dissimilar in many respects, but there is enough of identity between them to permit of a comparison, and that comparison is, we repeat, detrimental to Ernst on the score of originality of conception and power and finish of treatment. But it is in the quality of his tone—the most important attribute, after all—that Sivori's great superiority is, to our thinking, most perceptible. Ernst's is indeed beautiful, but far less so than Sivori's; and this not merely on any particular string, but throughout the whole range of the instrument, from the pianissimo notes on the first string below the bridge, to the sonorous fullness of the fourth. With Sivori no tone seems out of place—all appears to be a suitable and harmonious part of a great whole—the hearer is delighted and entranced, but not startled at the most unexpected transitions :—the artist, as it were, disciplines the ear of the auditor as he proceeds, for each succeeding marvel—the sense is intoxicated and the judgment propitiated; and one simultaneously feels the impossibility of a single charm being superadded to, or a single fault found with the performance. The emotion experienced on hearing Ernst is of a subordinate character to this :—the pleasure is less intense, and may be said to consist, not so much in the existence of materials for gratification, as in the absence of any for censure. In the presence of Ernst, you cannot for a moment forget that a great master of his

art is before you; but if you have heard Paganini and Sivori as well, neither can you forget that there are still greater than he. Ernst is to Sivori in music what Wordsworth is to Byron in poetry. The latter possesses all the merit of the former, with an indescribable amount of its own too. Simplicity in itself is no essential element of beauty, and is more frequently a source of weakness than of strength; and those who admire Wordsworth or Ernst because of their simplicity, as compared with Byron and Sivori, might just as reasonably admire a man because he had a toe or a finger less than the average number, except they are prepared to show that the brilliancy of the latter artist is false glitter, and that when they are ornate, they are meretricious—an attempt, we apprehend, that no one would think of making, for both can be occasionally simple to the severest plainness, without ever being feeble, whereas, those who are always simple are not unfrequently helpless. Sivori has repeatedly demonstrated that there is no music to which the violin is capable of giving adequate expression which he is not capable of treating in the actual spirit of the composer. His temperament—the consciousness of the highest order of intellectual and executive power—and, above all, the influence of the great model after whom he has formed his style, conspire to induce a decided preference for the brilliant, the dazzling, and the voluptuous :—he would rather be Cæsar in the banquet hall than Cæsar in the field; but Cæsar he is, wherever he may be found—in mail or in purple—in serious or in festive mood—alone, unapproached and unapproachable.

MR. ROWE'S CONCERTS.

These concerts came off at the Royal Hotel and Plymouth Theatre, on Monday last; at the Hotel in the morning, and

the Theatre in the evening. Expectation, with reference to the performers announced to appear at these concerts, had long been on the tip-toe; and the wonderful performances of one of them —Camillo Sivori—the pupil of the far-famed Paganini, had been heralded forth, without exception, in all the metropolitan papers, from whence the reports found their way into the provinces. The unqualified terms of approval in which the efforts of Sivori were spoken of by the entire musical world, could not but have the effect of creating a strong sensation in this neighbourhood, where the inhabitants are essentially musical in their tastes. With high hopes of hearing something beyond the talent they had heretofore listened to with much pleasure, did the visitors to the morning and evening concerts take their respective places; that those hopes were not disappointed, we make bold to affirm, and believe we shall not be travelling wide of the mark in asserting that every one present formed a higher opinion of the unrivalled talent of the greatest master of the violin —saving only Paganini, and him we must—than all the eulogies with which the London papers teemed, could have made them susceptible of. Matchless and overpowering, indeed, was the genius displayed by Sivori, on whom the mantle of his gifted master has fallen with indescribable grace. But how can we describe the sensations produced by the magic wielding of Sivori's bow? Language is altogether inadequate to the justice of the performance, and in the perfectibility of Sivori's genius we are tempted to exclaim: "Can such things be?"

. . . . . .

Then came the star of the evening—Sivori, and he did what we believe was never done before with such an instrument,—drew tears from his audience. The most death-like silence prevailed throughout the performance, which was only broken by the thrilling plaudits of a delighted and enthusiastic auditory.

. . . . . .

Again Sivori, with his "magic fiddle," appeared, and again did they together stir up the warmest emotions humanity is susceptible of.

(*Devonport Independent*, 28th October.)

Messrs Wright and Oury gave a concert on Tuesday evening at the Town Hall, with Sivori — as the magnet of attraction.

Sivori eclipsed himself, and it would perhaps be difficult to determine in what respect he is inferior to Paganini; if in any thing, it is in the depth of tone. His sudden transitions are extraordinary; his double stop, the whipping, etc., all closely resemble the performances of, and are executed in the same spirit as those of his late tutor. The musical portion of the audience and the orchestra appeared astonished and delighted at his double stop in an andante movement; and it was, indeed, a most skilful and masterly performance. Sivori played three pieces, and the applause that followed every strain was enthusiastic.

(*Brighton Gazette*, 2d November.)

JULLIEN'S PROMENADE CONCERTS.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

The unexpected engagement of the renowned pupil of Paganini, Camillo Sivori, no doubt lent *éclat* to these concerts. It is now several years since we heard this master of the art; even then his superiority was recognized. He has since been tested by the best English and Continental critics—he comes from the ordeal unscathed. Listen for a moment, while we describe the

outer man. He is as nearly as may be five feet in height. Nay, don't look credulous. We acknowledge that on the platform he looks a Titan, but he has so witched your ears that sight, feeling, motion, everything is concentrated into the sense of hearing; you drink in every sound, aye, at every pore, and forget the *personale* of the performer. Well, he is about five feet high, slenderly formed, a very expressive dark eye, well-formed and high, rather than broad, forehead, the perceptive organs well developed; the face, which, notwithstanding he is a native of Italy, is decidedly English, fringed with what Maginn would have called a "gentlemanly whisker." He dresses with good taste, and turns his collar in that manner prescribed by Christopher North, and practised by Byron. What, then, of his instrumentation? We had lately occasion to notice the performance of Vieuxtemps. A comparison with him is assuredly unfavourable to the latter. Vieuxtemps has great power, but Sivori has finer expression. Vieuxtemps astonishes; Sivori does so too, but he also charms. Vieuxtemps possesses breadth of conception; Sivori acuteness and delicacy. This was evident in Paganini's celebrated "Carnaval de Venise." Vieuxtemps rioted in chromatic runs and difficulties of instrumentation; but Sivori's conception and execution showed that he appreciated the grotesque humour of the piece, and could therefore better express it. In a word, Sivori's performance is less mechanical than that of his greatest rival. His execution of Paganini's celebrated feat on one string, was but second to that of his great master. Can we pay Sivori a higher compliment than to say that in his hands the violin fully realizes the description of that instrument given by Baillot, the great artist of the French school? "Its four strings suffice for the compass of more than as many octaves, and afford all the requisite resources for the flow and variety of modulation. By the aid of the bow, which gives vibration to the strings, and can draw sound from several at once, it adds to the charms of melody

that of harmony also. Its tone, uniting sweetness with power, places it at the head of all instruments. Whilst possessed of the ability to sustain, vary, and alter its tone, to speak in the accent of passion, and display the various emotions of the soul, it aspires to the honour of rivalling the human voice. " Whilst listening to Sivori, we could have agreed with the poet—

> That Orpheus' self might raise his head
> From golden slumber on a bed
> Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
> Such strains as would have won the ear
> Of Pluto, to have quite set free
> His half-regained Eurydice.
>
> (*The Birmingham Journal,* July 26th, 1845.)

He has performed several times before Her Majesty and Prince Albert, both at Windsor and Buckingham Palaces, and has received the most magnificent presents at their hands. His success amongst us needs neither comment nor reiteration. He stands at the very pinnacle of his profession, and is most certainly one of the greatest artists in the universe.....

And, as far as his instrument is concerned, he is incontestably the first, the inimitable, the unapproachable.

Equally competent to the severe school of classic music, and the mechanical dexterities of the most difficult of modern writing, he is alike a transcendant interpreter of Beethoven and Spohr, and a faultless executant of the wonders of Paganini. His intonation cannot be surpassed, and his delicacy and sentiment partake in the

highest degree of enthusiasm combined with genius. But we are writing a biography, and have not space to pause on the numberless excellencies and charms of his performance, which after all no words could do " plenteous justice to. "

But we were almost forgetting to mention that Sivori made an excursion in Holland, where he visited *eighteen* towns and gave *fifty* concerts in two months :

The first appearance of an artist, universally recognised as the only and at the same time the worthy pupil of the immortal Paganini, must undoubtedly produce the greatest sensation in our metropolis, which never had the good fortune to see that great master within its walls. The high expectations which had been raised among our *dilettanti* by the accounts published in foreign papers, have been completely realized, and even surpassed. In Sivori's wonderful play we discover all the qualities which we admired in the most celebrated violinists that we have heard these last years. This young artist unites the suavity of Molique, the broad and delicate play of Vieuxtemps, the passionate and transporting execution of Ernst, the bold strokes of Ole Bull and the melodious strain of Artot; whilst in exquisite harmony of tones he excels all those performers. He may indeed call himself the pupil and successor of Paganini. The sensation produced at his first concert, upon a numerous and select audience, is indescribable. Every pause in his play was the signal for the most deafening applause, and at the end of his three pieces, a *Concerto* of his own composition; a *Preghiera* and *Thème Varié* on a motive by Paganini; and a *Variation* of Paganini, he was called for with unanimous bravos. To conclude, he played an admirable *Fantasia*, which was also rewarded with a deafening peal of applause. We have

no doubt that this first appearance will be followed by a series of crowded concerts.

(*Handelsblad* (Amsterdam Paper), 10th November 1843.)

All the other Dutch papers having repeated the same praises, and even in a more enthusiastic strain, perhaps, than the *Handelsblad*, we decline giving any extracts from them, for fear of swelling the volume too much.

Sivori leaves London in October to return to Germany which he visited last May, and where he gave fifteen concerts in twenty five days. We subjoin a few extracts from the Hamburgh papers.

Scarcely has one violinist made his appearance, than another comes forward. To day we have to speak of Camillo Sivori, who announces himself as Paganini's only pupil, and who verily seems to have stolen one of the claws of that great master's demon. He is one of those tyrannical players who hold undoubted sway over their instrument and handle it like an obedient slave... All the prodigies of *arpeggio, ponticello, staccato, pizzicati* with the left hand, etc., are displayed in the greatest perfection by Sivori in a concerto, or what we would rather term a *capriccio* of his own composition... He is the greatest of all great artists. Let those, who have ears to hear, go and hear him...

On the second evening (Monday), we had the first part of a concerto by Paganini and the famous *Carnival of Venice*. Our astonishment and admiration are indescribable. That wonderful composition of the immortal Genoese caused a host of thoughts to rush to our brain, and set all our nerves quivering. In this piece, Sivori seems a mighty magician, conjuring up myriads of

notes and bringing them to light just as the composer conceived them. Those who have heard Sivori, may say that they have heard Paganini. —He is indeed the heir to his compositions and to his fame. Add to this, that the modest, unassuming manner of this extraordinary artist, who has scarcely entered into manhood, is calculated to win all hearts. — We are convinced that the longer he stays amongst us, the greater will be the number of his hearers. — That Paganini should have produced such a pupil, is without doubt the greatest of all the miracles that rendered his life illustrious and his name immortal.

(*Hamburgh Observer,* 19th April 1845.)

On the 11th took place the concert of the violinist Camillo Sivori, the only pupil of Paganini. How many artists have announced themselves as pupils of Paganini, the greatest of all great violinists! At length we have Camillo Sivori, whom we should proclaim a true and genuine pupil of Paganini, even if he had not said so himself. All the artists who have applied themselves to the study of Paganini's compositions, have been able, at the most, to present us with a feeble reminiscence of the great master's wonders; none ever succeeded in giving us the delight that we experienced on Saturday at Sivori's concert at the Dammthorhaüsel. A distinguishing feature in Sivori is, that to the highest perfection in the mechanical part of his play, he unites, the chief quality in an artist, a quality which many modern performers neglect, — the cultivation of tone. Sivori possesses a noble instrument; but what a magnificent sound he draws from it! His management of the bow is masterly. His concert consisted of the first part of a concerto of his own composition, and the *Andante* and *Clochette-Rondo* of Paganini. The first of these pieces is splendid. The *factura* of the *allegro* is worthy of all praise, the principal motive noble, and the pas-

sages admirable. The crowning-point of difficulties and effect is the grand final *cadenza,* calculated to astound all those who are acquainted with the violin. The artist's reception was most enthusiastic.

On the 14th, Sivori gave his second concert at the Dammthorhaüsel. He first played the *allegro* of Paganini's concerto in H minor, the cantabile of which is so beautiful and the *cadenza* so full of *bravura.* Such a glorious execution of *arpegii* we never heard since Paganini. His second pieces was the *Prayer of Moses* with a theme and variations of Paganini, composed for the G string alone which is tuned in B! This, in our humble opinion, was the most prodigious of all his performances. Where is the living violinist who could here venture to tread in young Sivori's steps? The concluding piece was the *Carnival of Venice,* in which all the wonders of Sivori's play are united, and which must drive even unmusical hearers into raptures of astonishment and admiration. That Sivori should have had to play "*the Carnival*" a second time, was not to be wondered at. (*Freischutz, Hamburgh paper,* 19th April 1845.)

Engagements await him at Hamburgh, Bremen, Hanover, Stockholm, and Copenhagen, etc., etc., etc. He intends passing the winter at the last-named capital, and returns to London in the spring, being his fourth season among us. In the following autumn he purports making a tour to America, and we have little doubt the same success that has followed him everywhere in Europe, awaits his visit to the New World.

Here ends the biographical sketch, to which, as I before stated, I have merely added a few slight circumstances, with extracts from the principal newspapers in Europe. These extracts I might have multiplied so as to convert this pamphlet into a large octavo volume; but I thought proper to confine myself to such as presented some distinguishing trait or other, calculated to describe in his smallest peculiarities the extraordinary, and I might say, the only artist, whose fame is already universal. Marvellous, indeed, is that fame, when one considers that Sivori has scarcely completed his 28th year. Every one is at liberty to think as he pleases; in our opinion, the following incontestable facts result from what precedes :

1st Sivori produces the most prodigious effect; an effect which many think equal to that produced by his immortal master.

2dly Sivori does not produce effect here rather than there, or there rather than here, but everywhere : in Italy, in England, in France, in Germany, in Rus-

sia, in Belgium; in capitals as well as in provincial towns.

3dly Sivori produces more effect than any living violinist : he is the only one, since Paganini, who has been able to give three, six, and sometimes ten consecutive concerts in the same town, and always with increasing success.

4thly And lastly. Sivori's talent is superior to every other. The German papers establish a parallel between Sivori and Ole Bull, entirely to the advantage of Sivori. The English papers compare Sivori to his rivals Ernst and Vieuxtemps, and award the palm to Sivori. As to the French papers, they place Sivori above all the violinists of the day.

Such facts need no comment. The learned, in general, do not enjoy, but judge; and the ignorant enjoy without judging. But when learned and ignorant (the former by reasoning, the latter by instinct) unite in proclaiming the supremacy of a man of talent, that man of talent is undisputed sovereign.— That sovereign is Camillo Sivori.

E. J.

THE END.

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